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National Council of Churches

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# American Churchmen Visit the Soviet Union

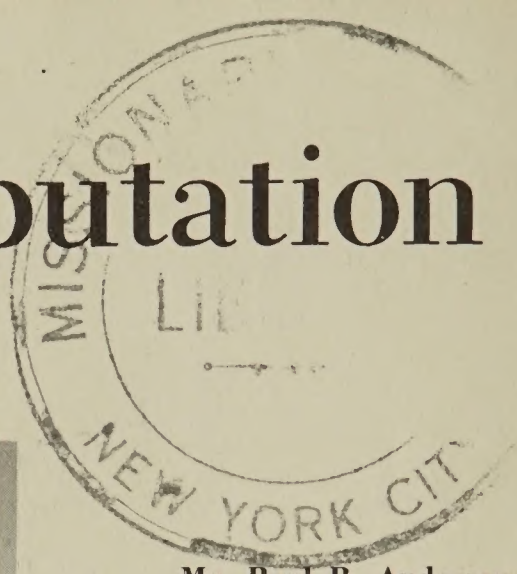


*Who Went and What Was Achieved . . .*

GIFT CORY



# the nine-man deputation



Mr. Paul B. Anderson, New York, (left) Associate Executive Secretary, International Committee of YMCAs.



Dr. Roswell P. Barnes, New York, the associate general secretary of the National Council of Churches.

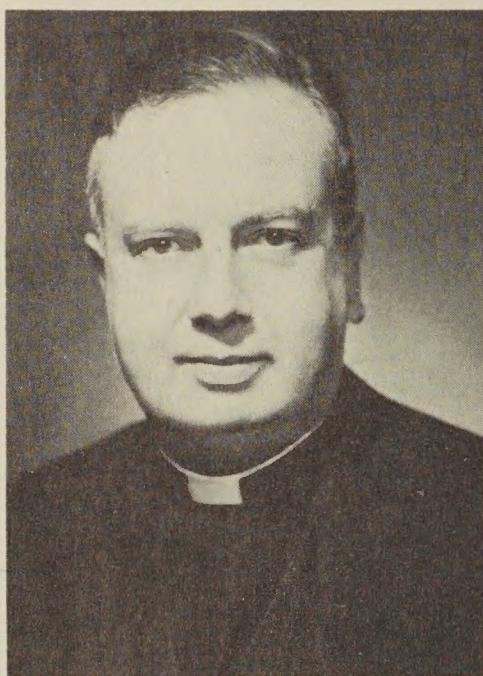


Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Philadelphia, Presbyterian Stated Clerk and President of National Council.

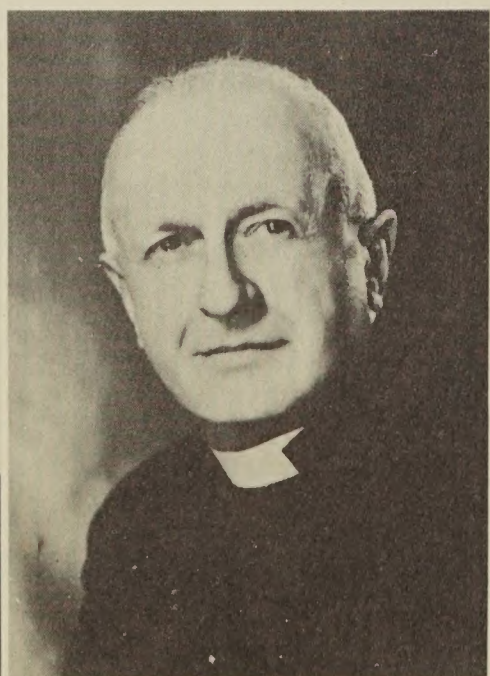
Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, New Rochelle, N. Y., (left) President of the United Lutheran Church of America.

Dr. Herbert Gezork, Newton Center, Mass., Baptist and President of Andover Newton Theological Seminary.

Bishop D. Ward Nichols, New York, Presiding Bishop First District, African Methodist Episcopal Church.



Mr. Charles C. Parlin, Englewood, N. J., (left) Methodist layman and senior member of a N. Y. law firm.



Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill, Greenwich, Conn., Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church.



Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk, Mt. Vernon, N. Y., Executive Director of the Council's Dept. of Int'l Affairs.





Metropolitan Nicolai, speaking through interpreter, takes arm of National Council President Eugene C. Blake in welcome at airport.



Patriarch Alexei greets (from left) Bishop D. W. Nichols, Rev. R. P. Barnes, Charles Parlin and Rev. W. Van Kirk as talks begin.

## *an historic precedent—why*

1. To make manifest the spiritual fellowship which all Christians have in Christ.
2. To exchange views respecting the life and work of the churches in the United States and the Soviet Union.
3. To increase mutual understanding between the peoples of the two countries and thereby advance the cause of world justice and peace.

**T**HE VISIT of the National Council of Churches' deputation to Russia was planned almost a year in advance. In June 1955 the Council's governing General Board, responding to an appeal of the 1954 Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches, voted that a widely representative group of American church leaders visit the USSR "as a manifestation of the spiritual fellowship binding all Christians."

On instruction from the Board, the Rev. Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Council President, proposed the visit in a letter to Patriarch Alexei, of the Russian Orthodox Church. A favorable reply, from Metropolitan Nicolai on behalf of the Patriarch, included this additional proposal: "We would also like to visit you and get acquainted with church life in America."

The National Council's General Board, convening in October, voted formal approval of the two-way visit.

The U.S. deputation left Idlewild Airport for Moscow by commercial airline, March 9, 1956. In an unscheduled air

stop at Prague they were guests of Czech Protestant and Eastern Orthodox church leaders.

The next day the American churchmen reached Moscow, where Metropolitan Nicolai warmly greeted them at the airport. A busy week of conversations followed, punctuated by receptions, sightseeing and side trips by motorcade in the Moscow-area. The talks, held mainly at the 100 year-old residence of the Patriarch, brought the Americans into face-to-face contact with Russian and Armenian Orthodox churchmen, Russian Baptists and Lutherans from the Baltic States.

Due to the nature of the conversations the deputation was able to make only two side excursions—to the Orthodox religious center at Zagorsk where they met priests in training, and to Leningrad where they visited youth centers and worshiped at the Cathedral of St. Nicholas.

Ten days after their arrival the American churchmen left Moscow for home. Flying all the way, with an overnight stopover at Stockholm, they arrived back in New York, Friday, March 23.



# The Conversations

## THE AGENDA:

- What the churches of our respective countries have done and are doing to promote the cause of world peace.
- The freedom of our churches to fulfill their mission.
- The Christian faith and other religions.
- The Christian faith and modern science.
- Present trends in theological education in the U.S. and the USSR.
- Christian literature.
- Relations between the churches in the U.S. and the USSR.

**T**HE FIRST of the formal conversations opened in the 100-year-old Patriarchate, Tuesday, March 10, at noon as the nine American churchmen sat down at a roundtable with Metropolitan Nicolai and interpreters. Metropolitan Nicolai, who directs the foreign affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, chose to represent alone the Orthodox Church in the initial session lasting two hours.

The conversations were continued thereafter on five different occasions at the Patriarchate and the Monastery at Zagorsk. All of the discussion items suggested in advance by the National Council's deputation had been accepted by the Russian churchmen. It was agreed that Metropolitan Nicolai would chair the first meeting, and thereafter the chairmanship alternated between the two delegations.

At one time or another the following religious leaders participated in the conversations:

His Eminence Nicolai, Metropolitan of Krutitzk and Kolomna  
Archpriest Konstantine I. Ruzhitsky,

Rector of Moscow Theological Academy

Professor Alexej Ivanovitch Ivanoff,

Professor of Church History, Moscow Theological Academy

Professor Lev Nikolaevitch Pariisky,

Inspector Leningrad Theological Academy

Bishop Sergei, Starorussky and Novgorodsky,

Vicar to the Metropolitan of Leningrad

Archimandrite Pimen, Abbot of the Troitse-Serguievo Lavra

Protopresbyter Nicholai Koltchitzky,

Secretary of the Holy Synod

Archpriest Igor Manouchitsky,

Rector of the Church of John the Warrior

Professor Alexei Ivanovitch Georgievsky,

Professor of Liturgics, Moscow Theological Academy

Archpriest Paul Sokolovsky, Rector of a church near Moscow

Bishop Vartan of the Armenian Church,

Etchmiadzin, Soviet Armenia

The Rev. Arsunian, Armenian priest in Moscow

Professor Arechelian, of Etchmiadzin, Soviet Armenia

Archbishop Gustav Turs, Lutheran Church of Latvia

The Rev. Matulis, Lutheran Church of Latvia

Archbishop Jan Kiivit, Lutheran Church of Esthonia

Rev. Toomin, Lutheran Church of Esthonia

Jacob Ivanovitch Zhidkov, President of the Union of  
Evangelical Christian Baptists

Alexander Karev, General Secretary of the Union of  
Evangelical Christian Baptists

At the outset of the conversations Dr. Blake made a general introductory statement on behalf of the National Council's deputation. In the course of his remarks Dr. Blake referred to the action of the General Board in instructing its deputation "to extend our greetings in Christ to the leaders of the churches in the USSR and to assure them of our prayers that the God of Righteousness will lead the people of the United States and the Soviet Union into the paths of peace." Dr. Blake stressed the church-to-church character of the deputation's mission. "Our mission to you is a church mission," he said. "It is not a subsidiary supplement to national diplomacy. We come without any instructions from our government. . . . We are here as churchmen with a dedicated loyalty to the Risen Christ. It is in the context of the Christian Gospel, and the bearing of that Gospel upon the conduct of men and of nations that we embark upon these conversations."

Metropolitan Nicolai responded in a similar vein. He said he was quite pleased with Dr. Blake's statement and would see to it that each of the Russian conferees was given a copy. "We speak as Christians," he said, "basing our opinions on Christian grounds. If you are here without political instructions, so also are we. Our conversations will forge closer ties between us."

## The State of the Churches

On this question Metropolitan Nicolai spoke as follows:

"In 1918 the Church was separated from the State. This was the beginning of a new epoch. Up to that time the Church was connected with the State, not in harmony, but in disharmony. The activities of the Church were cramped thereby. For us separation of Church and State means that the Christian Church does not mix in the affairs of the State, nor the State in the affairs of the Church. The Church is free of any financial aid from the State. Our churches and our devotional activities are paid for by the contributions of the faithful. The Church is separated from the school. Religion is not a subject in the school curriculum.

"How, then, do children receive religious instruction? In their homes, and in the churches where special discussions are held, particularly on Sunday afternoons. Preaching is a regular part of the Orthodox service, but on Sunday evenings there are special discussions on the meaning of the Church. Believing parents can invite priests to their homes in order to give religious instruction to children.





## Formal Sessions Open In 100-Year-Old Patriarchate

The historic meeting of U.S. Protestant leaders with Russian churchmen opens on an exploratory note in Moscow's Orthodox headquarters under blazing lights. News cameras covered all aspects of the visit, and Moscow papers treated talks objectively, the deputation thought.

"The Church has no care of invalids or orphans or the aged. The State does this. We do have, however, a special department to care for aged priests and for widows of priests.

"We have theological schools. There are eight seminaries for priests in towns and villages, and two academies comparable to your theological colleges and universities. Candidates for study in the theological schools come after completing the secular schools. The secular schools have both believers and unbelievers. Those who enter the theological schools are believers. The number of applicants exceeds the places available. The theological schools prepare priests. The academies prepare theologians and teachers, and engage in theological research.

"On the matter of relations to the State, the government has created two Councils, one on the affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, the other to deal with all other religious bodies. Both of these Councils are under the Council of Ministers of the USSR. There are no clergy on these Councils. They provide the means for intercourse between the Church and the State. For example, if a church requires material for new construction or repairs, the Council arranges for the procurement of the material at State prices.

"The Russian Orthodox Church has about 20,000 parishes, 35,000 priests, 69 monasteries (including convents for women). The principle applying in the monasteries is 'ora et labora'—prayer and work. The nuns make embroidery for vestments and other items for the church.

"The Russian Orthodox Church has a certain number of churches abroad. There is the Exarchate in North America with about 20 parishes. In Western Europe there are churches under the Patriarchate in France, England, Holland, Finland, and elsewhere. There are also Russian churches in China.

"The Patriarchate has five departments, namely, (1) a special educational committee for theological schools; (2) a department for international church affairs; (3) a business department; (4) a publication department; (5) a department of pensions.

"The administration of the Russian Orthodox Church is handled according to the rules adopted by the Church. It is governed by the Patriarchate together with the Holy Synod consisting of six members. There are three permanent members, namely, the Metropolitans of Kiev, Leningrad and Moscow. The other members are diocesan bishops who take their turns. There are 72 dioceses which conform to the geographic State adminis-



## 'WE HAVE A GREAT DIVERSITY OF CHURCHES'

### *... Armenians*

trative districts. Each diocese has a bishop, who, in certain instances may be an archbishop or a metropolitan.

"On the most important matters there is a 'Sobor' (Convocation) of the bishops. In addition, there is a national Sobor which alone has the right to effect changes in the Constitution of the Church. The National Sobor comprises all of the bishops, beside representatives of the clergy and the laity. It elects the Patriarch. Patriarch Alexei was elected in 1945 on the death of Patriarch Sergei.

"THERE IS in the Soviet Union a great diversity of churches and religions. These include the Russian Orthodox, Moslems, Roman Catholics in Lithuania, Evangelical Lutherans in Latvia and Esthonia, the Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptists, Adventists, Methodists, Reformed, Old Believers, Armenians and Buddhists.

"Representatives of all these religious bodies met in 1951 in Zagorsk. Notwithstanding the variety of religions represented, they all agreed in seeking peace.

"The Russian Church pays homage to the other churches. It has received delegations from the Dutch Church, several groups from England, a delegation from the Church in Denmark, also from the West German Evangelical Church, and from the Quakers in Britain.

"In the Orthodox Church there is no centralized body for all of the Orthodox Churches in various countries. There are 14 autocephalous or autonomous Orthodox Churches. They have a common faith and the canons which are accepted by all. There is a feeling of friendship between them. The Orthodox Church does not believe in proselytizing, as it wishes to avoid arousing the feeling of hatred between Christians."

Bishop Vartan spoke for the Armenian Church. "The Armenian Church," he said, "is one of the most ancient in the world. Christianity took root in Armenia in the second century and became dominant among the Armenian people in the third century. The first church was established in 301 in Etchmiadzin, this word meaning 'Christ descended on earth.' It is the residence of the Catholicos Vasgen. All clergy, from the Catholicos down, are democratically elected. The Catholicos is elected by a National Assembly which includes delegates from the Armenian churches not only in Soviet Armenia, but in India, the Middle East, Europe, and the USA. He is elected for life. He is supported by a Supreme Church Council consisting of eight members, four bishops and four laymen, the chairman being the Catholicos. There is a theological academy for training priests and leaders in the Church and there are monasteries. The Church publishes an official organ. In the United States there are 52 Armenian churches in four dioceses, comprising approximately 200,000 Armenians. The distribution of the Armenian Church magazine is prohibited in the United States.

### *... Lutherans*

"In Armenia there are five dioceses, with a Church Council in each one. In Beirut there is a Catholicos subordinated to the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin. In Beirut there is an academy for training Armenian clergy for their churches abroad. There are 25 churches in four dioceses in the Middle East. There is also an Armenian Patriarch in Jerusalem and one in Constantinople, where there are 33 churches.

"In Cairo there are five Armenian churches, with 40,000 Armenians. They have philanthropic societies. There are also churches and such societies in Alexandria, Egypt. The churches in Iraq, Iran, Europe, Egypt and USA are directly subordinate to the Catholicos Vasgen. In Europe there are two dioceses with headquarters in Paris and London."

In response to an inquiry Bishop Vartan stated that the Armenian Church does not participate in the ecumenical movement.

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ARCHBISHOP JAN KIIVIT spoke for the Lutheran Church of Esthonia. He said in part as follows:

"The Esthonian people are mostly Lutheran. We have large parishes, with an average of 6,000 to 10,000 persons in each. During the second world war Esthonia was fought over twice. Three-quarters of the church buildings were damaged. This left the Church leadership in a very difficult position. Some of the pastors had to leave their parishes. Restoration has pro-



U.S. Theologian Gezork found Baptist leaders Jakob Jidkoff (right) and Alexander Kareff eager to discuss mutual church problems. Dr. Gezork preached twice, scored a great hit in Moscow church.



## ... Baptists, too

ceeded after the war and all the destroyed churches have now been restored. Most of these parishes have priests. We have courses for the preparation of priests and of organists.

"In 1949, a new Church constitution was adopted. At the top is the Church Assembly, which elects the Archbishop for life, with a consistory consisting of six assessors. The Archbishop is president. There is an auditing committee. The Church is divided into 11 districts, each with 16 to 17 parishes and with a rural dean. We have about 150 pastors, with a total of about 100 churches, and perhaps 350,000 adult members. Regarding Church-State relationships, the Lutheran Church is not a State Church. It was separated before the Revolution. The clergy are paid by contributions from the faithful."

Archbishop Turs spoke for the Lutheran Church of Latvia. "Our story" he said, "is about the same as that of the Archbishop of Esthonia. We have 15 districts which send delegates to form a General Synod. Each district is represented by one pastor and one layman. The total number is, therefore, about 50 members. This Synod elects the Archbishop for life. We have 300 parishes with as many churches. There are 110 pastors, not including organists. This means that pastors must serve more than one parish. We have theological courses training new pastors. Our Church is supported entirely by voluntary contributions.

"We are not a member of the World Council of Churches, but we support the idea, 'one flock and one Shepherd.'" Archbishop Soderblom once visited Riga and made a great impression in presenting the ecumenical movement. We also know Dr. John R. Mott very well, from his visits to Russia before 1914; he came several times to meet with the Russian Student Christian Movement. We greatly value his deeds."

Alexander Karev, Secretary of the Council of the Union of Evangelical-Christian Baptists, spoke for that denomination. He said: "In two years the Baptists will celebrate 90 years of organized existence in Russia. The movement appeared simultaneously in the North and the South of the Russian Empire. In the south it had German origins and was called the 'Stundist Movement.' Some were Lutherans or Reformed, but with pietistic leanings. They preached to the Ukrainians. In the north the origins were English, coming from the Plymouth Brethren. Hence there were formerly two Baptist Unions in Russia. In the south there was the Stundist preacher Pavloff who entered the Baptist seminary at Hamburg, returning to give the movement a German structure and influence. In the north there was the preacher Prokhanoff who was educated in Bristol, England. The differences in origin and style between these two movements hindered unity, but in 1944 they did unite. In 1945 the Pentecostal people also entered the Union, but some of them later broke away because of their practice of 'speaking with tongues.' They are now being 'cured' and are returning to the Union.

"In the Union there are about 6,000 congregations. We do not have definite statistics in regard to membership, but it is



Dr. Blake presented gifts to Evangelical Lutheran Archbishops Gustav Turs of Latvia (left) and Yan Kiivit of Estonia on behalf of the deputation, discussed wider contact between East-West church groups.

approximately 520,000 for adult members. The Union is headed by a council of 12 members. It is divided into about 60 districts, each of which is led by a superintendent. Each year about 10 to 12 thousand persons are baptized and enter the Church.

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"EACH CONGREGATION is led by a pastor who is assisted by five to 10 lay preachers. There is no Bible school, but we have in mind organizing one. The congregations select their pastors on the basis of (1) their spiritual experience and (2) their warmth of heart. The Russian Baptists pay more attention to spirit than to knowledge. They publish 'The Brotherly Messenger' ('Bratsky Viestnik') six times a year. At present a new hymnal is being printed. They are also planning to print a new edition of the Bible, using matrices furnished by the American Bible Society."

Practically every member of the National Council's deputation spoke on various aspects of the life and work of the churches in the United States: Bishop Sherrill for the Episcopal Church, Dr. Fry for the Lutheran churches, Mr. Parlin for the Methodists, Bishop Nichols for the Negro denominations, Dr. Gezork for the Baptists, and Dr. Blake for the Presbyterians. Dr. Barnes and others spoke of the general structure of organized religious life in the U. S., and of the work of the National Council of Churches. Copies of the 1956 edition of the Year Book of the American churches, together with a number of documents related to the program and policy practices of the National Council, were left with the Russian church leaders.

The description and discussion of American churches covered such questions as these: How many Protestants are there in the United States? How many Roman Catholics? How many church schools, Protestant and Roman Catholic? Is the Episcopal Church interested in relationships with the Russian Ortho-



# PEACE: Correcting the Record —

dox? Is the Episcopal Church in America now studying this question? What is the relationship of the Orthodox Churches to the National Council of Churches?

## The Peace and War Issue

This question occasioned the most vigorous discussion; two sessions were devoted to it. At the first of these two Metropolitan Nicolai was the only Russian churchman present. The American deputation questioned the wisdom of this arrangement since there would be nine American churchmen on one side of the table and only one Russian on the other. This arrangement, however, seemed to be preferred by the Metropolitan.

"The Russian churches," he said, "are ready to cooperate with any movement which can effectively work for peace. When the World Council of Churches issued its statement against atomic war, the Orthodox Church welcomed it. We have written to the World Council of Churches proposing that concrete arrangements will be made for a meeting with its representatives. In the United States, many Protestant clergy raise their voices against the atom bomb and for disarmament. We welcome such voices. The Russian Orthodox Church extends its welcome to all who work for peace."

Dr. Van Kirk presented a paper on behalf of the Deputation. Seven points were emphasized: (1) peace is the by-product of truth, freedom and righteousness; (2) steadfast support for the United Nations; (3) international negotiation for the easing of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union; (4) support of efforts for international control of atomic energy and multilateral control of armaments through the United Nations; (5) support of programs of economic aid and technical assistance, not as hostile acts against the Soviet Union but as a humanitarian endeavor; (6) the establishment and safeguarding of human rights and fundamental freedoms; (7) the goal of autonomy for subject and colonial peoples.

Metropolitan Nicolai replied saying he appreciated the spirit in which Dr. Van Kirk's paper has been presented, and he would have it translated into Russian and make copies available to the Russian conferees for a subsequent discussion.

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AT THIS POINT the discussion turned to the question of the relation of the churches in the United States to the peace efforts of the World Peace Council, in which Metropolitan Nicolai had played so important a part. The Metropolitan was reminded of the unjustified criticism that had been levelled against the American churches from the platform of the World Peace Council. One of the American churchmen said, that certain of these misrepresentations had been made by Metropolitan Nicolai himself. When the Metropolitan seemed not able to recall what had been said by him regarding the American churches, it was suggested that certain quotes be read. The

Metropolitan replied that the days of the Korean war had been difficult for everybody; that what had been said during those days had best be forgotten since now a new era of understanding had begun.

To this one of the members of the Deputation replied that it would not be easy to forget that American Christians had been called murderers; that they had been accused of supporting the alleged practice of germ warfare in the Korean war. "We cannot forget, but we can forgive" it was said. "We refer to this unhappy past in the spirit of Christian love. We have come a long way to show how eager we are to reach a basis of understanding but this understanding can best be reached as we face the facts of history, and correct the misinterpretation of the past."

Still another member of the Deputation insisted that the World Peace Council continued to be dominated by the Communists. It was pointed out that the conditions for peace set forth by the World Peace Council corresponded in every essential respect to the policies of the USSR; that the few churchmen from the West who had collaborated with the World Peace Council did not have the confidence of, nor were they representative of, their churches.

Metropolitan Nicolai replied saying: "Let's not argue about the World Peace Council, but rather find common ground. Let us now and for the future try to find a basis for common activi-

## The Churchmen . . .



Alexei, patriarch of Moscow and of All Russia (left) invited U.S. delegation and was host. Metropolitan Nicolai (right) directs foreign relations office of Orthodox church and will head Russian visit in U.S.





### *... And the Always-Crowded Churches of Russia*

Crowds engulf U.S. deputation and hosts as they pass through main gateway of ancient monastery at Zagorsk, about 80 miles from Moscow.

Hunger for religion remains strong in USSR and churches visited by deputation were usually as crowded as this one, located near Moscow.

ties. I speak to you not as a member of the World Peace Council, but as an Orthodox Christian. If during the Korean war we erred somewhat, that is now long ago, and it is all over." To which it was replied that hereafter, when future reference is made to the American churches, it would be better to ascertain the facts. Said Bishop Sherrill: "We have travelled a long way, not for superficial conversations. We must speak the truth—in love. If we did not care for understanding, we would not have come so far."

The second round of discussions on the peace and war issue took place at a later session. Metropolitan Nicolai read a statement saying he welcomed, "with joy and brotherly love, the Christian spirit of Dr. Van Kirk's statement given in the name of the delegation of the National Council of Churches, and its assurance that 'the churches comprising the National Council firmly support a policy leading to the establishment of peace and justice throughout the world.'" The American conferees took special note of the fact that the Metropolitan had linked

together in his statement, the concepts of peace and justice. The Metropolitan asked each of his Russian colleagues whether they agreed to the points set forth in his paper. Each one expressed agreement, the Baptist saying: "I would not add a word, or take away a word."

Dr. Van Kirk, after consultation with members of the National Council's deputation, presented a comment on the Metropolitan's paper. Here again, as earlier, stress was laid upon considerations of justice, freedom, and human rights. The Deputation also requested that all of the formal presentations on the peace question be published together.

### **The Freedom of the Churches to Fulfill Their Mission**

Bishop Sherrill introduced this item of the agenda. He explained the meaning of the separation of church and state in the United States. He spoke of the manner in which churches



in the United States are supported; policies respecting religious instruction in other than church schools; taxation in relation to the churches; administration of church institutions in areas of education, health, and charitable endeavors, and participation of church members in the political community, stressing particularly the variety of political opinions and the freedom with which choices are made on the political level.

"Clergymen differ as do other citizens in their political allegiance to one party or the other," said Bishop Sherrill. "There is no clerical party in the United States and no church uniformity in the use of the ballot. . . . The churches acting severally, and many times in unison, do not hesitate to criticize actions of government, sometimes on local or again on state or on the national level. The churches have a prophetic function, a responsibility, when needed, to be the conscience of the nation. . . ."

Protopresbyter Nicolai Koltchitsky of the Russian Orthodox Church, in speaking to this question said, in part: "It is necessary that our guests understand that the mission of our Church is to bring our brothers closer to God. Religious life is closely connected with deeds. Our Russian Orthodox Church holds that the clergy must not only teach, but be an example.

There are seven Sacraments, but the most important are confession and communion. They form a close bond between the believer and the pastor. The spiritual life of a Christian is expressed in that he is in close touch with his pastor; whatever he does is with the blessing of the priest. The priest visits his spiritual children very often. If there are misunderstandings in the families, the priest does what he can to solve them. If there are children, the priest teaches them to pray. The believers are under the direct influence of the priest. Only his death or his departure from the place separates him from the believer. As regards the family they may all be believers, but there can be families in which there are some who do not believe, either the father or the mother. In such cases those who believe come to see the priest. So there is no hindrance to the ministry to the family.

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**R**ELIGIOUS LIFE is also deepening in that bishops visit their parishes, talk with the people and thereby strengthen both the clergy and the people. This stimulates the activity of priests. Such is the religious freedom of the priest to fulfill his mission.

"The Church is divorced from the State. We live only on the contributions of believers. The more sincere the priest, the more he is loved, the better is the Church supported. The sale of candles is the chief source of income. They also pass the plate in the churches.

"The people show their attitude toward the priests by the extent of their giving. The priest has full freedom in visiting his flock; his children are not discriminated against in the educational system, either in the lower or the higher schools. Nor is there any discrimination in accepting people for work. Many Christians hold very high places in industry and in government service."

Jacob J. Zhidkov spoke, for the Baptists: "We preach the gospel intensively within the premises of the churches" he said.



Russians many times voiced satisfaction that a first step toward mutual understanding had been taken, for example as Archpriest Igor, rector of a 14th century church, talks with Dr. Blake in Kremlin.

## *'We Must Strive . . .*

"It is not our practice to have services in the open air. There is no hindrance to attending services. We have no organization of youth because we find nothing in Holy Scriptures that tells us to have such organizations, and we adhere strictly to the Bible. . . . Young people work in the factories, and in addition, they are active in developing their intellectual life. We consider it improper to take their time for additional studies."

Archbishop Kiivit of Esthonia explained that the churches do not have a tax or assessment as before. Support, as in the case of the Orthodox Church, is on a free and voluntary basis. Archbishop Turs added that he and all Lutheran ministers had "complete freedom" in their sermons.

Speaking for the Orthodox Church, Father Koltchitsky said that the main object of Orthodoxy was the saving of souls—through worship, preaching, confessing and visiting homes. "The Russian Orthodox Church" he said, "is at work not only in the USSR but also abroad. In China there is a diocese with an Archbishop. There are Russian Orthodox missions also in other countries where our hierarchs and priests fulfill their task. In Japan, there are many Orthodox Japanese Christians, but unfortunately we do not have our own bishop."

The conversations on the question of the freedom of the churches to fulfill their mission clearly showed no agreement had been reached as to what constitutes "the mission" of the churches. In the absence of such a common interpretation, the





Paul B. Anderson, speaking fluent Russian, repeats to Orthodox Bishop Sergei the U.S. deputation's hope that the preliminary search for common ground could be broadened in return visit to U.S.

## *. . . to Know Each Other'*

conversations respecting the freedom of the churches did not always reach definite conclusions, and will be continued in America.

### **The Christian Faith and Other Religions**

This question was introduced by Paul B. Anderson. Dr. Anderson spoke of the missionary activities of the American churches, and of the development of indigenous churches in many parts of the world. "As we look out upon the world," said Dr. Anderson, "we see so many places and so many people and so many situations in which Christ's love and truth can meet human need. Certainly the task of missions cannot adequately be fulfilled by the Christians of any nation. If we are one in Christ, we are one in His service to all the world."

In his reply, Alexander Karev, Baptist, remarked that in the USSR there are three types of non-Christians: Moslems, Jews, and Buddhists. "We find that we are related to other religions because they have faith in God," he said. "What is the chief relationship of Christianity to non-Christians? In the Holy Scriptures it is written 'All nations shall fear God and are loved by Him.' As God loves all who fear Him, so they should also be loved by Christians. We Christians love all who fear God, in spite of their being of different religions."

Father Nicolai Koltchitsky, speaking for the Orthodox said: "We have much missionary work without having a specially appointed society for this purpose. Christians and non-Christians are united in the defense of peace." He referred to the 1951

Conference at Zagorsk attended by representatives of all the Christian churches and other religious bodies in the USSR, and said that all were united in two things: the Lord and peace.

### **Modern Science and Religion**

Dr. Blake, in his presentation of this issue stressed the fact that religion in the United States, as elsewhere, was still confronted by the "superficial assumptions of materialistic secularism. Religion," he said, "has no quarrel with science — no more does science have any quarrel with religion when religion avoids entering other fields than its own. . . . In our country the great majority of the best scientists no longer make the mistake that was so often made two or three generations ago of supposing that science has all the answers to the real questions of life's meaning."

Professor Alexei Ivanovitch Ivanoff, a professor of the Moscow Academy, spoke for the Russian Orthodox Church. He said, in part: "Truth has been given by Revelation through persons and presented in the Holy Scriptures, in the Holy Tradition, and in the Church Councils. These truths are eternal, and cannot be added to nor diminished. The Bible and nature are two books written by our Lord for reading by man. Each is supplementary to the other and they do not contradict each other. Men make a mistake when they try to read only one of these books, since either book requires supplementation from the other. We may be sure that the data of science, achieved by long hard work, is not contradictory to faith. They come closer to our faith as we study them, and they make us believe in our faith as unbreakable, and in the work of our Lord."

Metropolitan Nicolai, upon the conclusion of Dr. Blake's presentation said: "I find that we agree in our understanding of this matter."

### **Theological Trends**

Dr. Herbert Gezork, in his analysis of theological trends in the United States, made three main points: a strong realization of and emphasis upon the relevance of the Christian faith, not only for the life of the individual but also for that of society; a reaction against liberalism with its great faith in human reason, which has brought about a strong revival of theological interest and especially biblical theology; a trend toward ecumenicity with strong emphasis upon the question 'What is it that unites us?'"

In the discussion that followed it was stated that in the eight Seminaries now open in the USSR there were 773 students; in the two Academies, 142 students; in the courses by correspondence, 431 students. In addition, there were 200 clergy not students in residence. The grand total of those studying theology is 1,546. It was pointed out that, in certain instances, young men had abandoned engineering or other lucrative professions to enter theological study. It was also explained that while formerly theological students were mostly sons of the clergy, now, theological students are from many different walks of life. Entrants to the theological seminaries and academies must be 18 years of age, have passed their high school course and know the rudiments of the Orthodox faith. All theological students receive board and room and pocket money.



# 'The People Do Not Need So Much Literature . . .'

Archpriest Constantine Ruzhitsky, Rector of the Moscow Theological Academy said that formerly theological instruction "gave much erudition, but not much preparation for pastoral service." "Now," he said, "the Academy does not bother with rationalism or philosophical systems, but tries to give the spiritual knowledge which will be useful for the work of the priests. Our believing people are very conservative. If a rare preacher preaches a philosophic sermon, our people say 'We can get that elsewhere, tell us about Christ.' Now our efforts are based on the teachings of the Fathers of the Church.

"It is not that we are not interested in the same things as the Western churches, but we feel that it is our destiny to base our instruction on patristics. This is a legacy of riches to be revealed to our young men. All of the papers they write, the answers they give in examinations, must conform to the teachings of the Fathers."

In response to the reference by Dr. Gezork respecting the trend toward ecumenicity, Archpriest Ruzhitsky said: "In regard to the Ecumenical Movement, we once felt that it was tied up with politics and in 1948 therefore the Orthodox Church decided against participation. Since that time the Russian Orthodox Church has been carefully studying the course of the Ecumenical Movement. We welcome many sides of it. Now the question of entering it is up for consideration. The Moscow Patriarchate is now in correspondence with the World Council of Churches."

## Christian Literature

Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, speaking on this subject, declared the use of the printing press was indispensable to any cause, including that of religion, in the modern world. "Any force which restricts, or forbids a free press to the church," he said, "is a serious threat to its ability to fulfill its mission." Dr. Fry then referred to the voluminous publication of religious books, pamphlets, and educational materials in the United States. He estimated the total circulation of all American church periodicals to be in the neighborhood of 75,000,000. Dr. Fry mentioned particularly the following four types of religious publications: devotional, evangelism, stewardship, and religious education. In conclusion he said: "Christianity would limp and be in jeopardy without the wide publication of the good tidings in print as well as by word of mouth. This freedom needs to be preserved and used to the full."

Alexei Ivanovitch Ivanoff, Professor at the Moscow Academy, spoke of the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in the field of literature. He is a member of the editorial board of the Patriarchate publishing department. He stated that the "Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate was published monthly; that each issue contained articles by professors or students or the clergy. Other magazines are published by the Church in the Ukraine, and abroad. There is also published a Calendar (church almanac) which carries information about church services, the calendar of the church year and some articles."

"As regards non-periodical literature," he said, "we have published manuals for the conduct of services; two volumes of addresses by Patriarch Alexei; three volumes of addresses by Metropolitan Nicolai; and other works by Metropolitan Nicolai or under his direction, including: "The Defense of Peace," "The Spiritual Legacy of Patriarch Sergius," and "The Truth About Religion in Russia." There is now in printing the full Bible and a separate volume of the New Testament and Psalms." "We have already published a book of prayers in 250,000 copies. We propose to publish annual manuals for pastors and other manuals for use in conducting services. Soon we shall publish the text of the liturgy. We now have in printing all the liturgical books required for the services in the Orthodox Church."



Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, talks to priests in visit to Moscow church. He also spoke briefly to congregation.

IT WAS EXPLAINED by another spokesman of the Orthodox Church, Father Igor, that there was less need in that Church than in the Protestant churches, for Christian literature. "Conditions in the USSR," he said, "are different from those in the Protestant churches, where everyone can give his own interpretation of the Gospel. Here only the Church has the right to teach. With the Protestants the clergy are mostly elected. With us the clergy are set apart by the Holy Spirit. The clergy have authority which is immeasurable as compared to the laity. Authority rests with those who are ordained. Therefore, the people do not need so much printed literature. The only interpreter of religious life is the Church itself."

To the foregoing, Dr. Blake said that in many ways Protestantism is the result of the printing press. "In the West," he said, "the Church had overlaid the Bible with many traditions, and the Reformation removed many of these traditions in order to show forth the Bible."

In response to an inquiry as to whether there was study of the Orthodox Church in the United States, Dr. Anderson spoke of the books published in the United States concerning the Orthodox Church. He held up a copy of the Greek Orthodox Year Book, explaining that he would give copies to both the Moscow and Leningrad Academies. He also referred to other books regarding Orthodoxy or by Orthodox authors published by the YMCA Press, a number of which he had brought with him and turned over to Metropolitan Nicolai for presentation to the theological Academies in Moscow and Leningrad.

At the conclusion of the formal discussions a Communique was issued. It will suffice for the purpose of this narration to quote the concluding paragraph of this joint statement:

"These conversations took place in a spirit of Christian mutual understanding and were of friendly and sincere character. As a result of the exchange of opinion there was expressed a firm desire to develop contact by means of visits to each country by church delegations, and also the exchange of literature on theological science and church history; by increasing acquaintance with the doctrinal system and moral theology of the churches and by close common work on the current question of modern times—the maintenance of peace in all the world, with the conviction that all of these means will facilitate the cause of drawing together and of the friendship between our peoples."

—WALTER W. VAN KIRK



# A Word of Greeting

**Dr. Blake:** We come to you in the name of Christ. We come commissioned by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

It has been almost half a century since your churches and ours have had face-to-face discussions. Even in earlier times we were not in close association. In those times geographical distances and slowness of transportation separated us.

Recently, even though we have not been in conversation with each other, history has thrown us closer together than formerly because we represent Christian traditions and concerns in our two nations which constitute a highly important—if not determinative—influence in the fateful life and death issues of many peoples.

Our mission to you is a church mission. It is not a subsidiary supplement to national diplomacy. We come without any instructions from our government. We are under no obligation to report to government upon our return. We are here as churchmen with a dedicated loyalty to the Risen Christ. It is in the context of the Christian Gospel, and the bearing of that Gospel upon the conduct of men and of nations that we embark upon these conversations. . . .

We are committed by our understanding of Christian principles to certain social and human values in the present world situation, values which are essential to both justice and peace. Our convictions rest upon theological grounds. We believe that nations and peoples are subject to moral law grounded in the nature and the power of the Creator of the world and of man.

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**W**E ARE NOT asking your assent or agreement to our pre-suppositions. We wish to state them clearly so that you may know our point of departure as we enter our discussions. One of our members will be prepared to make an opening statement on each of the items which we have agreed upon for discussion.

Notwithstanding the ideological differences by which our nations are divided, there is much of elemental and essential significance which the churches of your country and ours have in common. Despite their radically different settings in history, their different traditions and circumstances, they look to the same Lord and Master. What we have in common as God's gift is, therefore, of the utmost importance, because it is concerned with the understanding of history, of the nature of man, of human destiny, and of how God rules and what He requires of men.

We have both shared the heritage of the Prince of Peace for more than nineteen centuries. Surely this heritage and our common loyalty to His Gospel and to the Universal Church, will enable us to stand together for peace and for the freedom and justice without which peace is neither good nor right.

We come to you in the hope and faith that the Holy Spirit will illumine all our minds and hearts as we rededicate ourselves during these days to the discovery of the Truth in Christ and to obedience to Him who is the Head of the Church which is His Body.

**Patriarch Alexei:** We were delighted to hear recently about your desire to visit us and to get acquainted with the position and life of our Church, and now we with joy welcome you as our dear guests. . . .

What is it that unites us? First and foremost, we are united in our common faith in our Lord God, and our aspiration to guide our own life and that of our believers according to God's Commandments.

Though we have different views on Christian truth and its understanding, differences in Church ritual and the entire form of Church life, these differences, these partitions, as a wise Archbishop of the Russian Church said, "do not reach up to Heaven," and they should not be obstacles to our fraternal relations. . . .

Under all conditions of its historical existence our Church has preserved its own inner wholeness and unity and, in contrast to the Western Churches, has avoided interfering in secular affairs, having in mind the words of our Saviour: "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18, 36).

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**F**ROM THE EVE of our adoption of Christianity, that is, from the end of the Xth century, for almost five hundred years, our Church was under the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch, and it was only in the middle of the XVth century, that it liberated itself from this dependence. . . .

At the beginning of the XVIIIth century, Emperor Peter I deprived the Russian Church of its Head, abolishing the Patriarchate, and placing the Church on a line with other governmental offices. It was a blow for our Church, which thereby lost its ecclesiastical independence. . . .

God's Temple and the Church community were at all times the core of the Church's work. The Church was not only the place for praying, but also the school for nurture of believers and for teaching them the Christian life, also a shelter for those seeking consolation from the inevitable sorrows of life.

You are so kind as to visit us in the period of the life of our Church when it, being separated from the State, once again has legitimate canonical structure, with the Patriarch as its Head.

Everything in the world takes place in its good time and according to God's will, as in this case the State, built on a democratic basis, has allowed the rebirth of the Church in its high dignity. This was brought about by the Will of God, and our Church was given full ecclesiastical freedom, protected in this by the laws of the State.

I am confident that this present meeting with you, zealous Church workers, will lead to closer relationships between our Church and your Churches, and even more broadly, it will strengthen peace and friendship between our nations.

## THE PAPERS

Texts of papers presented to the Russian churchmen as a basis for discussion will be found beginning on Page 16.



# 'The Visit Was Profitable:

## *A Statement by the Deputation*

OUR MISSION was to church leaders in Russia. We knew in advance of our going that it would not be easy to achieve understanding, let alone agreement. But we believed that in a time of world tension, with deep cleavage between East and West, Christians of varying backgrounds and traditions should talk with one another with frankness in an endeavor to clarify differences and to seek areas of agreement. This we did.

The experience was profitable. We understand the Russian Churchmen better as a result of our conversations. We are also confident that our clear statements face to face enabled them to understand us better.

This visit should be understood as a first step toward future correspondence and other exchanges. Thus limited in objective our mission has been accomplished and we regard it a distinct success.

We were received with generous hospitality. We had formal conferences as well as countless personal conversations, since we were constantly in the presence of Russian Christians. We visited many churches and shared in the worship of the Orthodox as well as the Baptists. Lutherans from the Baltic states and Armenian Orthodox joined in the discussions. We were taken to theological seminaries and academies and to monasteries.

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IN ADDITION we held two conferences with the Councils of the Soviet Government which deals with religious affairs. As we went for a definite church purpose, we make no comments on economic and political conditions in the Soviet Union except as they directly apply to the situation of the churches.

It is apparent that church and state have reached at least a temporary accommodation. It was stated again that church and state are separate. In a limited sense this is true, by our

standards. There seems to be no interference with worship in the church. Congregations were large and devout in the relatively few available churches with a preponderance of older people and of women. Enrollment in the few theological seminaries that are open is at capacity. Some churches have been repaired and a few new ones are being built, though there are far from enough.

The most severe limitation of the church is in the area of education; for there seems to be no religious education except in the home by parents and by priests or ministers on occasional visitations. Publication of literature is confined almost entirely to books used in worship. It is clear that the churches generally are confined within themselves. They regard their function as that of saving souls and preparing them for Heaven. They show little other concern for the social or intellectual life of their people. It was the prevailing assumption that science involves the reason, religion the feelings. Educational, economic, and political life is the concern of the state. Worship, from birth to death, is the task of the church.

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THIS SHARP DIVISION of function, in a population rapidly receiving scientific education biased toward atheistic assumptions, constitutes perhaps a greater danger to the church than does political control of the church itself.

This generally prevailing concept of the mission of the church is in our judgment inadequate. It has not always been so narrowly conceived by the churches now in the Soviet Union. There is obviously a fundamental difference between the concept of the mission of the church as we found it in the Soviet Union today and that which we hold in our churches. We hope that future conversations will bring both to them and to us a deeper understanding of the church's mission. On our side, we are already grateful for a deepened appreciation of the elements of devotion and mystery in Christianity. We hope that further contacts will lead them to increased concern for the totality of life.



# Both Sides Spoke Frankly'

*Issued on Return to New York*

**D**URING THE LAST several years the policy of the Soviet Government has discouraged persecution of the churches and has regarded the clergy and other believers as loyal citizens. At the same time it has increased the aggressiveness of scientific education as the means ultimately to eradicate religion. Thus the church has more freedom than in preceding decades but at the same time confronts a more subtle challenge. It is our hope that, even within the limitations imposed by the state, the church will find effective answers and effective means for teaching to the end that the Christian faith may be maintained and strengthened.

In return for freedom of worship the leaders of the churches have apparently inclined to go along with Soviet communist leadership in important areas. Perhaps the most distressing illustration is in the area of peace propaganda.

We had frank discussions on that matter. We are convinced that the Russian churches and people ardently desire peace. However, the statements of the church leaders were almost uniformly identical in making vague appeals for "the defense of peace" without taking into consideration the realities of the world situation or the facts of history.

It appeared to us that their concept of peace was derived not only from the Soviet Foreign Office but also from an inadequate concept of the mission of the church.

We pointed out that the World Peace Council, in which church leaders from Russia have given conspicuous leadership, has consistently taken the same line as that of the Soviet Government and that participants from the West have not been truly representative of Western churches. We emphasized the necessity of finding some other basis than their past positions if we are to work together for peace.

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**W**E MADE IT CLEAR that the means to peace are as important as the end. Specifically, we set forth certain positions taken by the National Council of Churches, for example:

(1) Peace cannot be achieved apart from justice, human rights, and fundamental freedoms. (2) The reduction and abolition of atomic weapons cannot be separated from effective inspection and control, nor in isolation from other armaments. (3) The goal of independence and freedom for subject and colonial peoples is best reached through processes of law and order and by free elections under international control.

The contacts we have already had with the church leaders in the Soviet Union have been worth while. Despite many and difficult differences we found important common ground as Christians. We look forward to a continuation of conversations in the United States in June. We were courteously received in Russia and we hope to reciprocate here. A beginning has been made. Under the guidance and power of God we believe the churches of Jesus Christ may be used for the reconciling and salvation of the nations.

*Eugene Carson Blake*

*Raul Hauduro*      *D. Wap nians*

*Russell P. Benson*      *Charles Paulin*

*Francis C. Beckwith*      *John K. Shumell*

*Herbert Gezon*      *Arthur W. Van Dusen*

March 23, 1956



# A CHURCH GOAL

## —Peace With Justice

*(A statement by Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk, executive director, Department of International Affairs of the National Council, at the opening session of the conversations with Russian churchmen in Moscow.)*

### I

THE MEMBER CHURCHES of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA vigorously support policies designed to establish peace with justice throughout the world. They believe that peace is the by-product of truth, freedom and righteousness. In their search for peace our churches place primary reliance on those moral and spiritual forces that derive from the Christian faith. They seek to view all problems of world order in the light of the truth concerning God, man and God's purpose for the world made known through Jesus Christ. They believe that the eternal God revealed in Christ is the Ruler of men and of nations and that His purpose in history will be realized.

### II

OUR CHURCHES ARE steadfast in their support of the United Nations. They believe that nations can better serve God's purpose for the world as they are brought into organic relationship with one another for the common weal. The Charter of the United Nations is, in fact, a compact of peace and friendship between and among the member states. If the nations will faithfully adhere to their pledges to resist aggression, to settle their disputes by peaceful means, to reduce and regulate their armaments, to safeguard human rights and fundamental freedoms to establish economic and social justice throughout the world, the dread spectre of war will vanish and the people of all lands, including those of the Soviet Union and the United States, will be able to enjoy the fruits of peace.

### III

OUR CHURCHES AGAIN, and again, have called upon the governments of the United States to keep open the doors of international negotiation. They have done this in the hope that the tensions currently existing between Russia and the United States may be eased. This will require patience and understanding. Believers in a God of love cannot concede that war is inevitable. To seek the peaceful settlement of international disputes, and to rise above immediate self-interest to the end that a general war may be averted, is a procedure required by Christian conviction and consistent with national honor and the mores of civilized states. From thousands of pulpits across America there is heard the gospel of world justice and peace. If there is one thing the American people desire above all else it is that the

conditions of peace may be firmly established to the end that the United States and the Soviet Union may walk together in the ways of peace.

### IV

THE AMERICAN CHURCHES, mindful of the needs for national strength in an insecure world, energetically support efforts to secure international control of atomic energy and the multilateral reduction and effective control of armaments, through the United Nations. We recognize that, pending the acceptance by all nations of a trustworthy system whereby all armaments, including atomic weapons, can be placed under international control, it is unavoidable that the United States shall maintain an adequate military establishment. Our recognition of this fact, however, must not be construed to mean that we are ignorant of, or indifferent to, the dire consequences that may befall our own and other nations unless the armaments race, now under way, can be stopped. That is why our churches welcome President Eisenhower's letter to Marshal Bulganin (March 6, 1956) that, under proper safeguards, all future production of fissionable materials be limited to peaceful use.

### V

OUR CHURCHES BELIEVE that economic security is essential to a just and durable peace. They supported the European Recovery Program, not as a hostile act directed against the Soviet Union, or any other nation, but as a humanitarian endeavor consistent with the Christian gospel that those who are strong shall help bear the burdens of those who are weak. Similarly, the American churches support programs of technical assistance to the peoples of the under-developed areas. They believe that wherever and whenever possible, technical assistance programs should be carried forward through appropriate agencies of the United Nations.

### VI

OUR CHURCHES BELIEVE that the establishment of a just and durable peace cannot be fully achieved apart from the establishment and safeguarding of human rights. Among the Christian requirements of world order is a recognition of the dignity of the human person as the image of God, and the granting to all men of the rights and liberties compatible with this conception of human worth. The American churches pressed for the establishment of a commission on human rights within the structure of the United Nations. They hailed the adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declarations of Human Rights as an event of historic significance. They believe the rights set forth in this Declaration flow from the recognition that every person is of equal worth under God.





The American deputation is shown Alexei's private chapel in the Patriarchate. From left to right, Metropolitan Nicolai, Patriarch Alexei, an interpreter, Dr. Blake, Dr. Van Kirk, Dr. Barnes.

## VII

OUR CHURCHES BELIEVE that that government which derives its just powers from the consent of the governed is the truest expression of the rights and dignity of man. They support the goal of autonomy for all subject and colonial peoples. They hope that the colonial powers may speedily give further tangible evidence of their purpose to discharge the "sacred trust" which they have acknowledged under the Charter of the United Nations, to promote the well-being of dependent peoples, to insure their economic and social advancement, to develop appropriate forms of self-government, and to assist in the progressive growth of their political institutions.

## VIII

THE FOREGOING is only a summary statement of the purpose of our churches to work for world justice and peace. Under the guidance of Almighty God they will do everything within their power to keep alive the hopes engendered by the Geneva Conference of the heads of state, and to forge between the people of the Soviet Union and the people of the United States a bond of enduring friendship.

# 'We Do Not Interfere In Political Acts . . .'

— a reply by Metropolitan Nicolai

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, participating in the movement for peace, proceeds from the demands of Christian duty. According to its ancient traditions it does not interfere in the political and diplomatic acts of governments, considering these acts as lying beyond its competence.

ON THE BASIS of its Christian duty, it may express and does express Christian concurrence in such questions as the destruction of the colonial system, economic aid to underdeveloped countries, etc., for the reason that such concurrence is dictated by Christian love for neighbor and the concern of brother for brother; but it does not participate in the realization of undertakings in this respect.

IT RAISES its voice against atomic weapons, against tests of hydrogen bombs, against the race for armaments, stands for confidence among nations and governments, seeing in all of this the basic grounds for reducing international tension and, by these its representations, satisfying the demands that the voice of Christian conscience be heard.

IN WHAT WAYS DOES our Church express its activities on behalf of peace? By daily prayers for peace in our churches; in sermons for the defense of peace, preached in our churches; in official communications (pastoral letters) and declarations in the name of the Church to its flock and to Christians of the whole world. In statements for the defense of peace at various international gatherings and at international conferences, utilizing every occasion for this purpose.

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THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH desires that a single front of all Christians in defense of peace be created, for the prevention of war, and rejoices at every sympathetic voice in this connection from brother Christians of all the churches, as well as believers in non-Christian public opinion organizations. It believes that the voice of all Christian public opinion, the common demand of the entire Christian world in defense of peace, should influence and does influence governments and nations in the matter of the struggle for peace, and that they constitute a great moral force and cannot help but aid in the reduction of international tension and the strengthening of confidence among nations, as well as measures of governments devoted toward peace throughout the world.

FOR THIS REASON, we with joy and brotherly love, welcome the Christian spirit of Dr. Van Kirk's statement given in the name of the delegation of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, and its assurance that "the churches comprising the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA firmly support the policy leading to the establishment of





Bishop Nichols with interpreter talks with a uniformed Soviet transport official as the delegation walks through Kievskaya station of the traditional Moscow showplace, the subway. At rear, Dr. Gezork and Bishop Sherrill.

### *. . . Metropolitan Nicolai*

peace and justice throughout the world," of which we also have known from the press.

WE SEE COMPLETE concurrence with our American brothers-in-Christ on the basic questions concerning the defense of peace; on rejection of aggression, on the resolution of international conflicts by peaceful means; on the reduction of armaments; on the struggle against atomic weapons, and the very spirit of war. Together with you, we believe that "people who believe in God's love cannot consider that war is inevitable."

WE ARE PREPARED to study now or at further meetings with you, any measures and means for Christians coming together in the matter of the defense of peace. We feel that our agreement on basic questions for the defense of peace, strengthened by direct contact and by means of further personal and written contact on this question, is a factor of great international significance in the matter of uniting Christians on the question of preserving peace on earth.

## And Dr. Van Kirk Clarifies Some U. S. Points

WE REGARD as very important the statement made this morning by Metropolitan Nicolai. We are impressed with the care with which each word is weighed. We ask that the statement of the Metropolitan and that which we presented to the Metropolitan, along with these notes, always be published together. We covenant among ourselves to do that, and we ask that you covenant among yourselves to do the same.

Our delegation welcomes the cordial tone of the statement presented by Metropolitan Nicolai. We are grateful that at several important points agreement has been reached.

Certain additional comments must now be made for the sake of those who, in the future, read the two documents together.

**A.** We have learned from Holy Scripture and believe as churches that both the goals and the means of achieving goals are morally important and inseparable. Peace is the fruit of righteousness and cannot be achieved apart from justice, human rights, and fundamental freedoms.

**B.** When we speak of disarmament we have in mind all kinds of armaments. We do not believe that atomic weapons can be dealt with in isolation from all other armaments. The question of the reduction and abolition of atomic weapons cannot, in our view, be separated from the question of effective inspection and control.

**C.** On the question of subject and colonial peoples we believe a distinction must be made between those nations that are now ready for self-determination and those in which progressive steps need to be taken toward that end. We believe some nations do not have the degree of freedom and uncoerced self-determination for which they are now ready. We believe that the goal of independence and freedom is best achieved through the processes of law and order, and by a system of free elections under international control and by the establishment of human rights and freedoms.

**D.** We reiterate what we said in the paper submitted by us to Metropolitan Nicolai respecting human rights. We believe the establishment of a just and durable peace cannot be achieved apart from the establishment and safeguarding of human rights. If we are to have peace with justice throughout the world there must be a recognition of the dignity of the human person as created in the image of God and a granting to all men of the rights and liberties compatible with this conception of human worth.

It is because we share with Metropolitan Nicolai the hope that a common Christian witness may be established in support of peace with justice that we have come to religious leaders in the Soviet Union. The establishment of this common Christian witness will require further conversations, and that is why we look forward to the coming of your deputation to the United States and to further exchanges. It would be our hope that in these further exchanges there might be a discussion of the role of the United Nations in the search for peace.



# Freedom

## Can Our Churches Fulfill Their Mission?

*(This statement on the freedom of the churches was presented by the Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill, presiding bishop of the U.S. Protestant Episcopal Church.)*

IT SEEMS THAT it might be helpful simply for the sake of information to summarize briefly the general situation of the churches in relation to the state in the United States, having in mind the freedom of the churches to fulfill their mission.

In the United States Church and State are completely separate. This is due in large part to historical factors—for many of the early colonists came to America in order to find religious freedom. The State in no way tries to direct the Churches. There is no Church which has preferential treatment. This does not mean that the State is indifferent to the Churches. The State grants to all of the Churches certain exemptions—for example Church property is not taxed. In the income tax paid by all citizens there is a thirty percent exemption of a person's income applied to gifts for charitable and religious purposes. Chaplains in the armed forces are paid by the State but only appointed upon recommendation of their own Churches. The number of chaplains of any one Church is determined by the membership of the Church in relation to the total population of the country.

It is an exception when an official of the State is not a member of a Church. The meetings of the Congress and of state legislatures are always opened with prayer. Thanksgiving, a national holiday set by proclamation of the President and the several governors, is for the express purpose of thanking God for the gathering in of the fruits of the earth. At his inauguration in 1953 President Eisenhower as a part of his address made a prayer to Almighty God for His guidance.

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THE CHURCHES ARE supported by voluntary contributions of their members, as no Church receives any grant from the State except occasionally for purely charitable work. In addition the Churches carry on a large missionary and charitable work throughout the world. The resulting picture is complete freedom of action in every way so far as ecclesiastical administration, creed and mission of the Churches are concerned. There are more than two hundred religious groups, which sounds more chaotic than it is, for the overwhelming majority are members of not more than twenty Churches. But all are free to preach their gospel without restriction, to minister to their people and to recruit new members. As a result there is considerable shifting of religious allegiance from one group to another as people move

and conditions change. Never has the Church membership been as large as it is today. It must be admitted that there is overlapping, for some communities are over-churched—but it is the inevitable price paid for liberty of conscience and freedom of worship.

This separation of Church and of State has a bearing upon education. The State on various levels conducts public schools and universities which are supported by taxation. In these there is no creedal teaching but considerable ethical instruction. In some communities pupils are excused on school time for instruction in religion in their own parish churches. It is fair to say that the degree of religious emphasis varies greatly in the public schools. Many feel there should be more, others fear a weakening of the principle of the separation of Church and State. There are countless so-called private schools and independent colleges and universities, not state supported. The Roman Catholic Church notably has its own system of education—but there are many others in addition. School attendance to a certain age is required by law but parents may choose either a public or privately supported institution.

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THE SAME SITUATION exists as regard to charitable institutions sometimes known as works of mercy. The State necessarily carries the heaviest load. But there are innumerable church and privately supported hospitals, clinics, orphanages and homes for the aged. Private charity on a purely voluntary basis bears a great responsibility and fulfills a need. In general these private institutions in all of these areas of education, of health and of charity have been and are pioneers which set standards, free from political control.

One last point in regard to Church and State. Clergymen differ as do citizens in their political allegiance to one party or another. There is no clerical party in the United States and no church uniformity in the use of the ballot. However, there are occasionally matters which arise having to do with great moral issues. Here the Churches acting severally and many times in unison do not hesitate to criticize actions of government, sometimes on local or again on state or on the national level. The Churches have a prophetic function, a responsibility when needed to be the conscience of the nation. We feel there is a necessity not only to worship God in Christ and to make real the eternal joys set before the faithful, but also to bring nearer that day when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.



# The Christian Faith And Other Religions

(By Paul B. Anderson, associate executive secretary, International Committee of YMCAs.)

OUR LORD said to His disciples that they should go into all the world and preach the gospel. This was done. St. Paul travelled all through the Mediterranean. According to tradition St. Andrew preached in the land of Russia; St. Thomas went to India. They were impelled by their knowledge that by telling people of the love of God in Jesus Christ, they were opening the doors to a better life in this world and reunion with God in eternity.

This same command has impelled other men and women from that time to this. The Apostles to the Slavic peoples—Cyril and Methodius — come to mind. Some of the early settlers in America began immediately to preach among the indigenous Indian population—William Penn, John Wesley.

Throughout Russian Church history there have been such missionaries—Stefan of Perm. Innokenti in Siberia. German in Alaska. The Orthodox mission from Kazan to the Moslems; Bishop Nikolai and Sergei in Japan. Where Christian faith is strong and true it leads men to follow Our Lord's command, to "bring all men unto Him."

For some time, in order that it might be more effective, the work of such messengers of the gospel has been conducted in regular manner through missionary societies. Christians in Belgium, Germany, Scandinavia, Great Britain, Canada, the United States were established by church people but not as part of the church. For instance, we have several missionary societies formed by women, who make it possible for women who feel called to this vocation to go abroad in Christ's service.

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IN THE COURSE of time these missions have borne fruit. Thus the work of Bishop Nicolai and Bishop Sergei in Japan resulted in the establishment of the Japanese Orthodox Church. So also the work of Missionaries in China, India, and elsewhere is now seen in independent churches.

However, these churches on the whole are relatively small in proportion to the total population of these countries. In some countries Christians are only one percent, elsewhere perhaps five or eight percent of the population. Why is this? The reason may be given, first, that in modern times the people are converted individually instead of by tribes or nations as in the middle ages. Second, other religions, especially Islam, Buddhism and various forms of religion in India, are in a period of revival and are also claiming universal significance. Third, with the spread of rapid transportation and communication during the last hundred years, people all over the world have been shaken loose from ancient ideas as well as customs and many no longer feel they need any religion.



With the aid of interpreters and Mr. Anderson, who speaks Russian, members of the deputation follow a lecture to future priests during tour of Moscow theological academy.

This forces all Christians—you in the USSR and us in the USA—to face new problems. There are now some eighty-five societies or official church organs in the U.S. sending missionaries abroad. The leaders of these bodies are now giving special attention to the program of missions, as a means of ascertaining what Christians can do that will best fulfill our Lord's command to His disciples. Missionaries join with indigenous church leaders in all countries in various forms of activity; conducting services of worship, preaching, hospitals and clinics; schools for general education in a Christian atmosphere, and special school for training priests, pastors, and church workers; publication of Christian literature, and all the many things that the love of Jesus Christ and the truth of His Gospel lead men to do.

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AS WE LOOK OUT upon the world, we see so many places and so many people and so many situations in which Christ's love and truth can meet human need. Certainly the task of missions cannot be adequately fulfilled by the Christians of any one nation. If we are one in Christ, we are one in His service to all the world.

We bring this matter up as a point on the agenda, knowing that the churches in the USSR also have the tradition of missionary work and also face the question of relations with other religions. What might be done by you and by us to mutually inform and strengthen each other and all the Christian churches in this field?



# Trends: Theological Thought and Education in the U. S.

(By Dr. Herbert Gezork, president of Andover Newton Theological Seminary, Newton Center, Mass.)

## I

ALLOW ME FIRST to deal with some very practical immediate questions which we are facing in theological education in our country.

1. We are facing a serious shortage of future ministers and priests. At present over 15,000 Orthodox and Protestant pulpits and parishes are vacant. It is estimated that by 1975 there will be 125,000 more churches than there are today with 28 million more church members; this means that we shall need at least 75,000 more ministers over and beyond those that will be needed to fill the positions vacated by death. The hopeful fact in this situation today is that in the United States and in Canada many more young men are turning to the Christian ministry as their life's vocation than in previous years. Many of our seminaries have doubled their student body within the last ten years. But a further considerable expansion in the work of training future Christian leaders is urgently necessary.

2. But just as much, or even more, as with quantity we are concerned with quality as we think of the future leadership of our churches. We are aware that not only deep consecration, but also high intellectual ability is needed in those who are to become the spiritual leaders of their flock. Thus efforts are being made to attract young men to the Christian ministry who show superior qualities of intellect and leadership.

3. There is a trend toward a stronger emphasis upon the functional aspects of the ministry. Traditionally, the four disciplines of theological study were: Bible, Church History, Systematic Theology, and Practical Theology. This latter, dealing primarily with pastoral work and the method of preaching, usually occupied a rather minor place in the theological curriculum.

Now, however, it occupies a favored position in many theological curricula. Most theological schools have a Department of Religious Education in which the problems of teaching the Christian faith to children and of youth leadership are dealt with. The work of church administration receives much more attention than formerly. Many theological schools have a Department of Pastoral Psychology and Clinical Training, often in connection with a great hospital, where the new insights of psychology are creatively used.

Most theological schools in our country now demand that every student during his three or four year course for some time, at least a year, works in a church, as teacher, or as assistant pastor, or as youth leader, usually closely guided and supervised by members of the faculty.

Several theological schools in America have added a fourth year to the traditional three-year course, and this fourth year is a kind of internship, where the young minister still under

the guidance of the faculty, actually serves a church as pastor or assistant pastor in a full-time position.

## II

HERE ARE SOME of the most important and significant trends as they have appeared in theological thought during the past generation.

1. There has been a strong realization of and emphasis upon the relevance of the Christian faith not only for the life of the individual, but also for that of society. The coming of the industrial age brought to the conscience of Christians the fact that there is not only individual evil, sin, and suffering, but also collective, and that therefore the judgment of God, but also the healing and redeeming powers of the Gospel must be brought to bear upon these collective evils. This emphasis in Christian theology has often been called the "Social Gospel." It has wrestled with such question as these: What is the Word of God with regard to economic systems, to social injustice and exploitation, the problem of order and freedom in political life, to the question of race, to the issue of war and peace between nations? Twenty-five years ago these were the questions which stood at the head of the list in theological thinking.

2. Then as the world crisis, beginning with World War 1, grew deeper, another trend appeared in theology. It was what we usually call neo-orthodoxy, especially connected with the name of the great Swiss theologian, Karl Barth. This was a reaction against liberalism with its great faith in human reason. Neo-orthodoxy brought the emphasis back to God, who is the wholly Other, high in His heaven, whom therefore human reason can never grasp or define or understand, but who must disclose Himself by revelation and who has done so in His word and above all in His son Jesus Christ.

Neo-orthodoxy brought about a strong revival of theological interest and especially biblical theology. It did not displace the social concern referred to in my previous point, but it reduced to more proper proportions the Christians' confidence in their ability to influence history and help bring in the Kingdom of God. It helped to replace an over-optimistic idealism with a more sober biblical realism.

In the work of the perhaps most influential contemporary American theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, we see a creative and fruitful blending of these two trends.

3. The third trend in theological thought is that toward ecumenicity. American Christianity has been characterized by a great diversity and divisiveness. We have never had a state church, we have complete religious freedom, and so the immigrants, coming from Europe, brought their churches with them; and new ones arose on American soil.

But as secularism in its various forms spread and challenged and attacked the Christian faith, there has been a growing



## ... Dr. Gezork

realization among Christians that the world is too strong for a divided church. And so, while formerly much theological thought was expended upon the defense of one theological position or ecclesiastical system against another, now the theological question became: what is it that unites us? In what do we stand as Christians together against a common foe?

Thus the great ecumenical conferences on Faith and Order took place, where theologians not only from different churches and lands, but also from diverse theological positions approached each other, and in humble searching tried to find a common ground. The questions of the person of Christ, the nature of the church, the problems of intercommunion between members of various confessions and denominations were thoroughly studied in these ecumenical conferences. This is also reflected in the planning for the next conference on Faith and Order in America to take place in 1957, which will have as its theme "The Nature of the Unity we Seek." This ecumenical trend leads us, I believe, from our various peripheral positions toward the center of our Christian faith, namely Christ our Lord. As we come closer to him, we shall come nearer to each other.



Members of the delegation take advantage of a free half hour at the end of the visit to buy a few souvenirs at Moscow's Goum department store. They found less choice, somewhat higher prices than a comparable U.S. store.

## Christian Literature: Indispensable

(By Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America.)

LARGE AND INTELLIGENT use of the printing press is indispensable for the success of any cause in the modern world. The Protestant Reformation, the first great religious movement of the modern age, is a shining example. The use of movable type was an essential ingredient of its progress. The portrait of the leader of the Russian revolution in an adjoining room reminds all of us of the mighty influence of newspaper and pamphlets in shaping the destiny of a nation. Any force which restricts or forbids a free press to the church is a serious threat to its ability to fulfill its mission.

Publication of books is a major activity of the churches of the United States. The presses of the Protestant churches in our country produced 231 theological and religious books last year. All publishers, including Roman Catholic and secular publications agencies, put a total of 747 religious books in the hands of the American people in 1955.

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BETWEEN 1400 and 1500 newspapers and magazines of religion are issued in the United States, about one-third by Roman Catholics, most of the rest by Protestants and a few by Orthodox Churches. This figure does not include parish papers printed by tens of thousands of congregations. Total circulation of all American church periodicals is probably near 75 million.

Four specialized types of publications deserve special mention. First are devotional booklets; one such manual of daily devotions appears in more than three million copies. Many denominations provide similar helps for private and family worship, totaling many million more.

My own church, along with most other denominations, is currently emphasizing instructive materials for lay evangelism. Booklets and tracts of this type are widely used in training laymen, women and youth to approach their neighbors and their comrades at work with an invitation to Christian discipleship. Through this medium many Christian people are being freed from their hesitation to speak to others about the Lord Jesus Christ and are being taught effective ways of witnessing.

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STEWARDSHIP is a third primary emphasis of our churches. The word is undoubtedly strange to you. To the best of my knowledge, no language of continental Europe possesses a noun that corresponds to stewardship. The basic idea behind this Christian insight comes out of the New Testament. It is the acknowledgment that all we are and all we have, our strength, our time and our money, come from a generous God and we should offer all three generously to Him in gratitude. Stewardship, more than any other single factor, accounts for the ability of the American churches to carry on Christian activity for our Savior in large dimensions.

Religious education, particularly for the young, is the biggest and perhaps most essential enterprise of all. Nearly eighteen million books of instruction were distributed for Sunday school pupils in 1954 by the presses of the denominations in the National Council of Churches. Through this steady flow of Christian truth into the lives of children, youth and adults of the United States our churches are reaching effectively into the minds and hearts of our people.

Christianity would limp and be in jeopardy without the wide publication of good tidings in print as well as by word of mouth. This freedom needs to be preserved and used to the full.



# Modern Science and Religion

## *A Reminder to the USSR About the Ultimate 'Why'*

*(A statement by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, president of the National Council of Churches, and deputation chairman.)*

IN THE UNITED STATES today we make a clear distinction between science and "scientism." Science is the pursuit of objective truth chiefly by means of repeatable experiments, preferably in laboratory-controlled conditions, but also, especially in the social sciences, by means of sample questionnaires and other statistical methods.

"Scientism" on the other hand is a philosophy, or even a faith, which holds that reality and truth are reached by scientific methods only. Since the hypotheses of scientists are usually adopted because of the possibilities of measurement, it is clear that scientific results are chiefly of a quantitative nature. Science is an instrument to use to ask the question "How?" or even "What?" It is a poor instrument with which to ask "Why?"

It was the late Canon B. F. Streeter, Anglican psychologist and theologian, who pointed out that if a fisherman chooses a net which will catch one size of fish, it is not surprising that when he draws his net that that is the size of fish he will catch. But this does not by any means prove that there are no other fish in the sea. So "scientism" is, in our understanding, an example of the logical fallacy of "begging the question." It is the scientific answer as being the only answer and it does this by asking only the scientific question which, however, is not the only question.

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RELIGION HAS no quarrel with science—no more does science have any quarrel with religion when religion avoids plunging into other fields than its own. "Scientism" quarrels with religion as it quarrels with art, music and poetry. In our country the great majority of the best scientists no longer make the mistake that was so often made two or three generations ago—and in some places even more recently—of supposing that science has all the answers to the real questions of meaning.

It was many years ago that I found an illustration which helped my own thinking in the same book "Reality" by Canon Streeter to which I referred before. He compared in that book a map of Venice with Turner's famous painting showing the Grand Canal. He then asked the question "Which is the best picture of Venice, the geographer's accurate map or Turner's painting?" The answer you must give depends upon your purpose. If you wish to see how to go from the railroad station to your hotel or even to St. Mark's Cathedral, the map is what you want. It gives a "true" picture as Turner's painting does not. For the artist even shifted buildings to make a better composition in his painting.

BUT IF YOU WISH to know whether it is worth going to Venice at all, whether you will spend your dollars and yourself in the effort to go from Florence to Venice, then Turner's picture is much more valuable and to the point. Turner's picture is best for an appreciation of Venice. This picture is concerned with objective value. The map is concerned with quantitative measurement. Both are valuable in their place. Neither is valuable out of its place.

In times past religion has sometimes been as wrong as "scientism" in trying to exceed its proper boundaries. When Galileo was persecuted by the Roman Church for his "heretical" views on astronomy, the Church mistakenly supposed that the new science was a threat to its revealed truth especially in the Bible.

Again in the 19th century many Christians were so much upset by Darwin's "Origin of Species" that again they feared for the truth of Christian revelation if Darwin should be accepted as explaining secretly the evolution of life. They feared their doctrine of creation was in jeopardy.

In both of these cases it is possible now to see that the fear of the Christian Church was unfounded and that the defenders of the faith had foolishly attacked the new scientific understanding. Just because the sun is now revealed to be but a small star in an immense universe does not prove that God does not exist or that man is unimportant.

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JUST BECAUSE we now understand that life on this planet has evolved through many millenia does not mean that God did not create man for his own purposes. Science tells us much about how God works but has no word, positive or negative, about whether God is nor what God has done or will do.

The thing that we should learn from the advances and triumphs of modern science is to avoid a narrow and literalistic interpretation of the Bible and to avoid conflicts with true scientific discovery.

But this means equally that the Church must attack "scientism" and all supposedly "realistic" scientists who take the position that the Christian religion is a survival from the childhood of the race.

It was the philosopher Hegel who took the now discredited position that religion was a childish myth that the grown-up scientific man would discard as he does other fairy tales. But Hegel was much less perceptive in this matter than Plato.

You will remember in the dialogues that when Socrates had exhausted the "scientific" analysis of a problem of ethics or metaphysics it was his habit to end the matter by telling a story—





Members of the deputation stroll across Red Square with their guides on a late afternoon as the historic visit re-establishing contact with Russian churches nears its end. Despite Moscow's northern latitude, weather was extremely mild, as picture shows, and the delegates found little snow.

## . . . *Science and Religion — a Reminder to Russia*

a myth. He knew that to penetrate most deeply into the meaning and mystery of life one must be a man of poetry and of religious insight and faith.

So we in the United States do not longer take too seriously the presumptive claims of naturalistic scientists who attack Christian faith. We have also given up the foolish habit of resisting the undoubted insights of good science. Of course religion in the United States as elsewhere is still confronted by the "superficial assumptions of materialistic secularism." This is caused not only by the cultural lag of many who do not yet know the real position of our ablest scientists but also by the temptation to the worship of mammon which is the ancient foe of faith in God.

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**T**HERE IS A DRAMA now playing on Broadway in New York entitled "Inherit the Wind." It is the story of the famous Scopes trial of a generation ago when a young teacher in Tennessee was being charged in court for breaking the law by teaching the theory of evolution in his classes in biology.

His legal defender was Clarence Darrow, an agnostic, but in many ways a great humanitarian and humanist.

At the end of the play, after the contest of the trial was over Darrow is found alone on the stage. He is packing his papers and books into his briefcase preparatory to going home. He picks up a copy of Darwin in one hand and a copy of the Bible in the other and for a moment weighs them against each other. Then with a smile he puts both books together and puts them together in his briefcase and goes off the stage as the curtain falls.

This it seems to me is a good parable of the proper relationship of science and religion today. Neither has anything to fear from the other. Man needs both in his briefcase.

**Additional copies of this pamphlet may be secured from the Office of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. Single copy price 50¢; less for bulk orders.**

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